

Evening Telegraph

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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 22, 1869.

THE WOMAN QUESTION.

A GREAT deal of earnestness and a vast amount of eloquence are at present lavished upon the vexed question of the equality of the sexes.

The advocates of the "woman" side are striving, with very zeal, to prove that women are fit and ready to perform the work of men; and that it is only "the dynastic reason of stronger bones and stouter sinews" that prevents them; and history is ransacked for the remarkable and singular examples which serve to illustrate their doctrine.

"The subjection of woman" has been chosen by Mr. Mill as the best phrase for the expression of his theme, and the words are meant to convey that the sex is held in a species of legal slavery. Women are truly in a state of subjection, but the legal enactment from which it rises is, we fear, beyond the reach of modern legislators, and can be found in those words in Genesis which, in good, old-fashioned, simple phrase, explain why "her husband shall rule over her."

Republicanism finds its most stirring plea in the fact that "a man's man for a that;" but the solemn truth that a woman is a woman spite of every proof to the contrary, is the stumbling-block in the way of the popular advocates who have taken direction of the present warfare, and her "subjection" arises from natural and physical causes which find only a faint reflex in the less immutable laws of the land.

It is to be regretted that the question has assumed its present aspect, for woman, or rather womanhood, needs advocacy before the world, and the exorbitant demands now made may retard that just appreciation of her legitimate work which would elevate both her and her brother.

The rhapsodizing about the "fair sex," with the vast amount of trashy poetizing in which she is styled "angel," saint, or goddess, has befogged men's understanding, and prevented the appreciation of her share in the world's work.

Despite all the sonnets that youth is ever penning "to his mistress's eyebrow," the man really considers her his inferior, and even the system of delivering over piety and charity into her hands is rather a convenient way of getting troublesome work off his own shoulders than of elevating her position.

The forced confinement of a broken leg may occasionally open a man's eyes to the value of his wife's services, and the variety, detail, and complexity of her employments, but the healthy, industrious, busy man is apt to esteem her labors too slightly and undervalue her accordingly. Money is the standard of values; and female industry, economy, and prudence, although ministering to domestic comfort, never appear in this tangible shape to attract attention and compel their just valuation. A man's work is worth so many dollars a day, and the sum can be weighed in the hand, but it requires not only a mental but a moral calculation to count the value of the work of the wife and the mother. The ordering of the kitchen and the nursery and the conduct of the parlor produce the health and happiness, and even assure the permanent prosperity of the household, and yet the services of body, mind, and heart which produce all this must be measured by another standard than that which marks the worth of man's work.

As civilization advances, the intellectual and moral powers of humanity acquire a money value; sinews only are paid for in the lower forms of industry, but the confidential clerk is paid not only for his arithmetic, but for his fidelity; and it is by a similar process that the work of women will receive its just estimation.

A woman who undertakes to compete with men in their special avocations suffers from many disadvantages, and nature has placed so many obstacles in her way that her success therein is a proof of her extraordinary power; but if the strength is within her heart, neither "Littleton upon Coke" nor even "Mrs. Grundy" herself can prevent Joan of Arc from leading an army, or Elizabeth Blackwell from winning a diploma.

The enfranchisement and elevation of woman appear at this time to be more the work of individual endeavor than of political or legal agitation. If women can prove that they can do men's work, they will get their fair share of it, but it is probable that the number of women that are fitted for law or medicine does not exceed that of men who have a fancy for worsted work, and so the balance will be maintained without serious detriment to either side. Woman's work is where her affections lead her; the daughter ministers to her parents, the wife to her husband and children, and the bulk of the sex will ever be restricted to such avocations; and the immediate and pressing necessity for woman is that these occupations should be regarded with fitting esteem. But, apart from this majority of the sex, there will be a minority who, without domestic ties and burdens, require a higher remuneration for their services. These women have minds as well as hands, and they are slowly winning their way into many avocations hitherto closed against them. No laws can help or hinder this intrusion: the success of the women depends upon themselves mainly, and their fitness for the work will surely settle the "subjection question" on the surest foundation.

When a woman earns five thousand a year by her pen, no one is bold enough to deny that she has a right to wield it, and the same effect will follow a similar cause in any avocation or profession in which she proves her right and ability to succeed by success.

IT APPEARS that Napoleon is beginning to fear that he may lose more than he can possibly gain by a refusal to negotiate equitable postal treaties with this country. If American orders for French fashions become less numerous than heretofore, and American tourists spend less than the usual amount of money in France, on account of the obstructions to postal and telegraphic communication which he has arbitrarily imposed, he will discover that he has made a bad addition to the list of his blunders. Even the luxury of examining despatches and keeping American newspapers and letters out of the empire may be bought at too dear a price if it involves the loss of a large number of the best customers of Parisian hotels and French manufacturers. The next postal agent we send to his court will therefore probably meet with better success than his predecessors.

A GOOD indication of the vigorous efforts which are being made to collect the internal revenue tax on spirits is afforded by the large number of whisky cases which are tried in the United States Courts; and as the prosecutions are almost invariably sustained, it is evident that illicit distilling has become a dangerous and difficult business. The result of the trial of the assailants of Detective Brooks in our local courts, and the intelligence furnished from time to time of the employment of United States troops to assist the revenue officials in ruffianly districts, afford additional proof that the power of the Whisky Ring is rapidly waning, and in the end it must, like all other defiant enemies of the American people, be thoroughly conquered and subdued.

SPECIAL COMMISSIONER WELLS contends that it is a fallacy that "an increase of money will of itself create trade." There might possibly be a grain of truth in his doctrine if it were applied to a country deficient in varied natural elements of wealth and capacities of production, but it is certainly not true of a nation like this, which abounds in dormant resources that can only be converted into materials for trade by the aid of money. Its comparative abundance, at various periods, has called into existence a thousand forms of industry, which, though now in successful operation, would speedily be destroyed if money could not be furnished to facilitate the exchange of the manifold productions of mankind. A whole people, like individuals, will increase the volume of their transactions when they have an abundant circulating medium, and restrict them when currency becomes scarce; and in this sense money does create trade, in spite of Mr. Wells.

A PROPOSITION has been started by the Trustees of the Old Soldiers' Home, near Washington, to erect on the grounds of that institution a bronze statue of heroic size of General Scott. There is a propriety in such a monument that cannot be disputed. Scott is a grand figure in our military history, and the nation should own a monumental statue of him, and no better place for such a memorial could be found than the one alluded to. The Old Soldiers' Home owes its foundation to General Scott, who recommended that the \$100,000 in silver that he levied upon the Mexicans for the treachery of Santa Anna in disregarding the obligations of a flag of truce be devoted to building a retreat for old soldiers of the regular army. The recommendation was carried out, and the building and its beautiful grounds are substantial evidences of the General's thoughtful consideration for his old comrades. The fund for the maintenance of the institution has been largely increased by the small tax of twenty-five cents a month on each soldier's pay, and there is now a surplus in the hands of the trustees much in excess of the needs of the Home. A portion of this it is proposed to devote to the purchase of the statue of General Scott, and it is to be hoped that the order will be given to an artist who is able to do justice to the subject. There is already too much job statuary at Washington, and it is high time that men of real talent should have a chance in preference to such pretenders as Clark Mills.

MISS SUSAN B. ANTHONY has administered an effectual quietus to those croakers who assert that women will unsex themselves by assuming all the rights and responsibilities that the most advanced ideas of the age can bestow upon them. Mr. Beecher, who is not so advanced in his ideas as he was a few weeks ago, made a speech at the Brooklyn Academy of Music on Monday evening, in which he expressed his belief in the unlimited good that would result from the woman's rights agitation, but added that he would certainly withhold his approbation if he thought that the emancipation of woman would unsex her. He disliked a masculine woman as much as he did a feminine man, and he believed in each sex maintaining its proper relations. Mr. Beecher's remarks brought Miss Anthony to her feet, and that irrepressible female asked her audience if they had ever heard of a fish that would cease to live in the water, or had they ever heard of any arrangement by which a bird would cease to be a bird in the air, and from these queries she deduced the conclusion that men showed an unfaithfulness to the laws of the universe by believing that political freedom could ever convert women into men. There was nothing, said Miss Anthony, in all the universe that could so change God's laws that woman should cease to be woman in all her womanliness. It is satisfactory to have this principle definitely settled, and once let it be clearly understood that women do not expect that the wearing of the breeches will enable them to alter the foundations of society, and we can bid them to go in for any number of reforms with a clear conscience.

VERY BLIND JUSTICE.

WHEN a layman stands contemplating the Goddess of Justice he may, in all the innocence of his ignorance, with some plausibility, be fearful that the scrupulously adjusted bandage about her eyes interferes a little too much with her sight, and that while the tilting of the scales she holds tells her when to strike, she is not always able to guess correctly where or how to deal the blow. A recent incident in our criminal court may, to a layman's mind, be an apt illustration of this idea. Three members of the bootblack brigade, two of them verging into manhood, knowing, shrewd fellows, who have frequently before occupied seats in the prisoners' dock, and the third, a little, friendless boy, whose parents have deserted him, but who had hitherto kept out of this court, were found guilty of stealing from a Second street shop a piece of muslin valued at some two or three dollars. The two larger boys, who, bear in mind, were old offenders, were sent to prison for eighteen months, while the little boy, with another youngster who had committed a similar offense, were sent to the House of Refuge, not for punishment, but for reformation. After a stay of some four or five days in that model institution, the managers thereof returned them to court with the very modest message, "That they were ungovernable, beyond control, and too bad for the institution, and their presence there was not only without benefit to themselves, but was detrimental to the moral progress of the other inmates." Taking this for granted, as perfectly true and just, the judge of the court stood the children up to the gaze of the idle and gaping rabble, administered to them a lecture, and, assuring them that what he was about to do was for their own good and salvation, consigned each to a solitary cell in the Eastern Penitentiary for the term of two years and ten months. The accomplices and seducers of one of these boys were sentenced to but one-half that term, eighteen months, and a negro man, but recently convicted of murder in the second degree, received a sentence of only three years. Does it not seem that justice has missed her mark in doubling the punishment upon this poor unprotected child, because he was so young and weak as to be led astray by his elders? Is it not, in the eyes of the multitude, levelling murder committed by a man to the grade of the theft of a rag by a homeless, destitute boy? If the heinousness of the crime regulates the penalty, where lies the difference between this case of murder and that case of larceny? We fear the layman will fail to see it. If his Honor had in view the welfare of the stray lamb, as he assured him, he must have forgotten that three years of solitary confinement, which the law imperatively prescribes for the inmates of the penitentiary, will cast a dark cloud over his youth that can never be cleared away; will estrange him from his fellows; will give no learning to his mind at the time when it is most easily impressed with the truths of knowledge; will blight every tender germ which has root in his heart, and which, with little cultivation, can be made to grow and bear good fruits; will make him a hardened, senseless misanthrope. These strike us as being most serious considerations in applying the law to a child who should rather seem to be the object of her special and most tender care, than her avowed and acknowledged enemies. Far be it from us to interfere with a judge in the just exercise of his authority and discretion: we only present these facts as rather singular and as worthy of note.

But another very pertinent query here arises: To whom does the House of Refuge belong? and what is it for? Does it belong to the county of Philadelphia, to the people whose money supports our public institutions? Or is it the sole property of that little aristocracy of men who happen for the nonce to be its managers? This question answers itself. Is it for the correction and reformation of those youthful offenders who are too naughty to be left at large, yet whose tender years prohibit their treatment as hardened criminals? Or is it merely for the accommodation of those boys and girls who are docile and well behaved, who need no correction, and will give the managers no trouble, and who might as well be at home helping their fathers and mothers? The action of the managers in the case above cited would seem to indicate that the latter would be their answer; but it certainly does not accord with the popular, common sense notion of the matter.

It seems that the Court has been unreasonably imposed upon in this matter, and unnecessarily led to adopt the strict course above mentioned, and if the Judge had at once remanded the juvenile prisoners to the House of Refuge, and enjoined the worthy managers to an energetic and faithful performance of their duties, it would have appeared more consonant with the principles of charity and true justice than to have consigned them, for a long and dreary period, to the convict's dress, the lonely cell, and the lasting infamy of the penitentiary.

THE MORAL EFFECT OF THE DRAMA.

IT is a fact, proved beyond the possibility of a doubt, that during the last five years there has been a sensible and even rapid decay in our public morals. It does not need that the student should point it out; its evidences are all around us, patent to the eye of the most careless observer. No one can read our local items and telegraphic news without becoming convinced that murders and robberies, enhanced by every circumstance of atrocity and daring, are fearfully on the increase. Yet it is not alone or so much in crimes like these that we can see the progress of our disease; it is in those subtle influences which permeate the veins of society and effectually give it vigorous life or destroy it; it is in the thoughts and opinions of the world about us. Never before in the history of our country have these influences been so tainted and corrupted; and what can be done to check the evil which is springing up with such a rank

growth from the bosom of the people, is the anxious question of all thoughtful and good men.

We take it that one of the first steps in the right direction would be the renovation of our stage. There is a large and powerful class of men among us who have hitherto ignored the influences of the drama on the morals of our day. Educated in a peculiar and straitened school of theology, they remain, in spite of their intellectual culture, obstinately blind to the potency of that great instrument of civilization or barbarism which has done so much to form national character in the past and in the present. They forget that the renaissance of letters in the period immediately succeeding the Dark Ages was most sensibly and successfully felt in the rude "Mystery" and "Morality" plays of the Church. They do not choose to consider what a gigantic share the works of Shakespeare, Jonson, their contemporaries and successors, have had in the education of the English mind and the structure of the English character. What our literature and theology would be with the influence of the drama left out of account, they have never owned to themselves, or even perhaps fairly considered. The time has come, we think, when this absurd prejudice must be put aside. If intelligent and good men stay away from the theatre, ignorant and bad men will control it.

The great question before every cultivated and pious man in this country to-day is, Shall this great instrument of the drama be mighty for good or for evil? It can be made effective for either end. Would it not be advisable to remove that ridiculous ban of excommunication which prevents many of the noblest and wisest among us from controlling its potent influence? Would it not be in strict keeping with common sense and sound theology that the ideas of the good and cultivated should permeate every source of public instruction which a beneficent Providence has given us? Assuredly. The days of interdicts should have passed away with the decaying power of the Popes and all those other shadows of barbarism from which the human mind has been emancipated; but they have not. There is a tyranny hardly less real than that of the ancient Church—a tyranny of hard, unreasoning prejudice, whose oppression is full as odious, insupportable, and ignorant as the other. If it stands in the way of our moral progress, shall we not consent to shake it off? and will not that large and respectable class who have hitherto ignored the stage come forward and make it a potent influence for good?

ORCHESTRAL MUSIC IN PHILADELPHIA.

THE Theodore Thomas concert, recently given in our city, reopened the question, "Why has not Philadelphia an orchestra capable of really thorough and effective rendering of great musical compositions?" From critics, both public and private, amateur and professional, have come answers which have gained only too much credence. "Our musicians," they say, "are unable to agree; they lack conscientiousness in rehearsal and in the playing of their several parts; they sacrifice nothing to the cause, but demand always the last dollar of their charge for the evening's services; in a word, they are wholly unfitted for the work required of members of a first-class orchestra."

That such criticism is both unfair and untrue, it will be easy to show; that it conduces in no degree to the improvement of orchestral music among us, is self-evident. Its result must ever be merely to prejudice the public against any effort which does not achieve in its outset what Thomas and his fellows have accomplished only after long practice. We grant, of course, the alleged causes of that inferiority are the true ones, or that our musicians, except, perhaps, to some small amount, are chargeable with it. There is in Philadelphia talent enough and readiness enough to do all that can be done anywhere in our country. The secret of the failure among us has been overlooked. Before we accept their wholesale condemnation, let us look candidly at the facts.

No one will deny, we suppose, that superiority in any sphere is attained only by care and faithful effort; the effort required from the members of an orchestra being diligent practice alone and together. But care and effort, especially in the practice of an art, require time—"and time is money." Hence, the fundamental condition to the success of an orchestra is ample support. It is simply absurd to suppose that any number of men can remain together long enough to get the necessary practice, unless in the meantime they are able to live. Make up a comfortable subscription list, and we shall have an orchestra in good time.

To support this view are the following facts:—The income of the Germania Orchestra, during one of its most successful seasons, was so small that, when all expenses were paid, each man received but five dollars for the whole winter's playing. In view of this, everybody will grant that none of its audiences failed to get as good music as they paid for. The Philharmonic Society last winter paid to each active member eight dollars for four symphony concerts, a sum insufficient to have paid a substitute in case of sickness. Yet this society is about to risk a second winter of concerts, rather than suffer their project to fail. These quarrelsome, selfish, ignorant musicians are actually, for the sake of the good cause which they so heartily despise, about to attend four concerts and from twelve to sixteen rehearsals, with but little promise of making one dollar thereby! Degenerate age! Men with wives and little ones to support, run the risk of expulsion from their theaters, or other ruinous consequences, in order to play a symphony that half their audience cannot understand!

Suppose the Philharmonic should decline to continue their concerts—can we blame them? A musical director at a theatre will give them steady employment for ten months in the year at from \$30 to \$40 a week. It cannot be said that they ought to decline this offer because the theatres will not allow them to be absent to play at their society concerts, to devote themselves to "high art."

Philadelphia can never expect a first-class orchestra until there is made for its support a first-class subscription list. Our musicians are not exacting. A manager of the Philharmonic Society informs us that five dollars assured to each player for each concert would be considered ample, the rehearsals being given willingly without pay. A list amounting to \$2000 or \$2500 would insure this result, and give us a series of symphony concerts, of which the first of last year's series was only a prophecy.

The Galveston (Texas) News is indignant because the President used the term "rebellion" in his message, and asks if "civil war," or "the late hostilities," would not have done as well. Investigators of "the little unpleasantness" are unwilling things should be called by their right names. An old Californian, who went some years ago to Australia, and has gone into the wine business there, has sent to a friend in San Francisco some samples of his wine for the purpose of comparison with the wines of California. He thinks that California and Australia will soon take front rank among the wine-producing countries of the world, and that a spirit of generous emulation would be advantageous to the wine-growers of both countries.

HOMER, COLLADAY & CO.'S STOCK OF DRESS GOODS, SILKS, ETC., Must be Sold Off by the Fifteenth of January. Homer, Colladay & Co. Black Silks, Best Lyons Make, \$1.50 worth \$2.50. Homer, Colladay & Co. Black Silks, Best Lyons Make, \$2.00 worth \$2.75. Homer, Colladay & Co. Black Silks, Best Lyons Make, \$2.25 worth \$3.00. Homer, Colladay & Co. Black Silks, Best Lyons Make, \$2.50 worth \$3.25. Homer, Colladay & Co. Hosiery of all Kinds, from 25 to 33 less than before. Homer, Colladay & Co. Linen Housekeeping Goods, An immense Stock, At 25 to 33 Less. Homer, Colladay & Co. Lyons Silk Velvets, All Widths, At Large Concessions. Homer, Colladay & Co. Mourning Goods In Infinite Variety, Lower than since the War.

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